

Patient-initiated follow-up plan (PIFU)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

If you have recently received hospital treatment, you may need a follow-up appointment to check on your progress. If you have a chronic (life-long) condition, you may need regular follow-ups with your hospital team.

Our patient initiated follow-up plan - PIFU - allows you to manage your own follow-up appointments. It gives you access to book an appointment only if you need it, for example, if your symptoms worsen, flare-up or change.

This means you don't need to attend a routine hospital appointment that you don't need, for example, every six months. For people with a chronic condition, PIFU may mean less frequent follow-up appointments and direct access to our clinics in between, if you need it.

Arranging your own follow-up appointments means:

- being in control of your own care and getting help when you need it
- (for many people) coming into hospital less often, taking less time off work and spending less time travelling to hospital
- a more efficient service and shorter waiting times for patients who need an appointment
- reducing the hospitals' carbon footprint by reducing the number of unnecessary journeys made to our hospitals

Please note:

- if you are under the care of more than one department your PIFU plan may not apply to all of them. Some departments may still send you regular follow-up appointments and it's important that you attend these so they're able to monitor your condition.
- PIFU is completely optional; you can choose to continue having routine follow-up appointments if you would prefer.

How does PIFU work?

Your clinician may recommend the PIFU plan if it is safe for you to manage your own follow-up appointments. Once you and your clinician agree you should go onto a PIFU plan then your clinician will give you a list of 'trigger' symptoms in the clinic outcome letter. You should contact us to arrange an appointment if you experience any of these trigger symptoms

How do I book a follow-up appointment?

The clinician will give you a telephone number and email address to use and this information is also included in your outpatient appointment letter or discharge summary letter.

When you contact us, you will need to provide your:

- name
- date of birth
- NHS/hospital number (please see your appointment letter)
- the clinic or service you need to book the appointment with
- **Please make sure to say you are on a PIFU pathway when you contact the service**

Our admin team will book an appointment for you and send you text reminders beforehand.

If you find you cannot attend your appointment, please tell us in advance, so we can give it to someone else who needs it.

What if I cannot get through to you to make an appointment?

The telephone number we provide should have an answerphone to leave a message. If you have not heard back within two working days, please call us on **020 3313 5000** to let us know.

When not to use PIFU

If you experience any symptoms not listed in your letter or need urgent medical advice you should contact your GP or phone 111.

How long does PIFU last?

Your PIFU plan will last for a specific amount of time. Your hospital care team will talk to you about how long you may need to keep your plan open depending on your condition and their judgement of how long you may need before you can be discharged back to your GP, if this is appropriate.

What happens if I don't need a follow-up appointment within the agreed timeframe?

If you don't need an appointment then you don't need to contact us. Depending on your condition and plan, we may have already booked a future follow-up appointment with you or agreed a time when you will be discharged from our care – these arrangements will go ahead as planned regardless of whether you book a PIFU follow-up appointment with us. Please refer to your outpatient appointment letter or discharge summary letter for more information about your PIFU plan and timeframe.

What if I change my mind and would prefer to go back to booking regular follow-up appointments?

Everyone has different feelings when they no longer need to be seen regularly by their medical team. If you wish to go back to booking regular hospital appointments, please tell us and we will arrange this for you.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Trust-wide
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