

Neurology Patient Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU)

PIFU direct tel: 01271 311585 Mon – Friday 8am – 4pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

Email: ndht.neurology@nhs.net

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

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

Patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you, the patient, in control of when you are supported by the neurology team. It means spending less time attending hospital appointments, but still having access to specialist clinical input when you need it.

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'll have spent time and energy putting arrangements in place to attend your appointment. Your condition may change or your symptoms may cause trouble in between regular booked appointments, and it's at this point that our input is most useful. With PIFU, you can get advice from your clinical team, who may suggest an appointment is required.

You initiate the follow-up assessment, instead of the hospital. Which is why this process is called patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU).

For all other concerns, or if you are feeling unwell, your GP will remain your first point of contact.

How will I know if I'm suitable for PIFU?

The neurology team will tell you if your condition is now suitable for PIFU, instead of regular appointments scheduled by the hospital.

You can decide to continue with regular appointments if you want to. Your clinician will have advised you about the PIFU process and given you this patient leaflet to support you.

When should I call for a PIFU?

The neurology team will outline the most important situations that should prompt you to contact them by PIFU. That does not mean that you cannot contact them at other times if you think you need to.

PIFU is not a replacement for urgent medical advice. If you require urgent medical advice, you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local walk-in centre or, if you are really unwell, your local Emergency Department (A&E)

How will I book a patient-initiated assessment?

This is a quick and easy process.

If you need advice or an appointment, just follow the steps below and the team will help you.

5 easy steps:

1. Call or email the neurology team

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Email: ndht.neurology@nhs.net

If you need to leave a message when you call, please leave the following information:

- Your full name and date of birth
 - Your hospital number and/or NHS number
 - A telephone number so we can call you back during our opening hours
2. Briefly explain to the neurology team about your symptoms and situation and that you need some clinical advice.
 3. The team will review your message and decide whether you need immediate clinical advice for your symptoms or if you need an appointment and which member of the team will best be able to address your needs. This might be a consultant, specialist nurse, or specialist therapist.
 4. If the team think you need an appointment, we will contact you to agree an appointment date and time. In most cases we will arrange an appointment for you within 10 working days. Sometimes it will be most appropriate to support you by having a remote consultation over the telephone or video link
 5. Attend you appointment either in person or remotely.

Will you still be looking after me if I'm on PIFU and don't initiate an appointment?

Yes, you will still be on our caseload. If we do not hear from you within your agreed PIFU timescale, we will arrange for a member of the team to review your case. At that point the team might contact you or your GP to decide if you still need our input.

What if I am worried and change my mind about this style of follow-up?

Just tell us and we will go back to booking regular hospital appointments for you. Our team are happy to discuss any concerns with you.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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