

You have been given an appointment to attend the facial palsy clinic at Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead. This leaflet will explain what will happen at this appointment so that you know what to expect and come prepared.

What do I need to bring with me?

- If you have received a questionnaire please complete this and bring it with you to this appointment.
- If you are taking several different tablets it may be useful to bring a list of regular medication that you have been prescribed.
- A photograph of you before you developed your facial palsy may also be useful. This would not apply to children or adults born with facial palsy.
- A book or magazine to read while you are waiting.
- If you have questions to ask the consultant please write them down and bring them with you, as people often forget what they want to ask.

What will happen to me at my first appointment?

You will need to come to the Main Outpatients department and check-in at reception. During your visit, you will be seen by a team of health professionals (known as a multi-disciplinary team) which include a consultant, a facial therapy specialist* a psychological therapist, and, if required, you may be asked to visit the medical photography department.

*Here at Queen Victoria Hospital we have speech and language therapists and physiotherapists who specialise in rehabilitation following facial palsy.

They are called 'facial therapy specialists' so you may be seen by either a physiotherapist or a speech and language therapist.

Your first appointment will be with the psychological therapist after this the nurse will inform you who you are to see next.

Psychological therapy

You will have a 20 to 30 minute discussion with the psychological therapist and will be asked to complete a questionnaire, if you have not already completed one. This is your opportunity to talk about any of the psychological issues you have been experiencing as a result of your facial palsy. It also gives us some insight into how you are feeling about yourself and what your expectations are from any potential treatment. If you and your therapist feel that further psychological intervention is appropriate then an action plan will be made to set this in motion.

Medical photography

If you are asked to visit the Medical Photography department, your visit will include taking a range of still photographs, a video of your facial movements and a 3D scan of your face. We understand that sometimes our patients are very self conscious and shy away from any form of photography. However, this is an important part of our assessment and will form a baseline for all future treatment. These photographs will allow us to measure the improvements that you make whilst under our care.

Appointment with the Consultant and facial therapy specialist (therapist)

The consultant will go through your questionnaire and will have had a discussion with the psychological therapist about any key issues raised in your consultation.

He will ask questions about the history of your facial palsy in relation to the information already received from the referral letter. He may ask more questions for further details. He will examine your face whilst the therapist writes down the important points. You will have an opportunity to ask your questions and these will be answered by both the consultant and the therapist.

Finally there will be a discussion about your treatment options. Many patients think that they will have an operation but most of our patients do not need surgery.

You may need a referral to the Ophthalmology department for specialist assessment of your eye closure and eye health. If so, you will be sent an appointment in the post at a later date.

How long should I allow for my first appointment?

Please remember to allow all morning for your appointment. You may experience some waiting. This is because for some people this will be their first opportunity to discuss their facial palsy with a team of specialists. Naturally some cases are more complex than others and take more time than predicted. Please be patient and we will give you the time you need when your turn comes.

What are the treatment options available to me?

- The emphasis of treatment is to restore facial function, such as, smiling, expressing emotion, eating, drinking, speaking, blinking and eye closure.
- The majority of our patients attend the facial rehabilitation clinic for further assessment and treatment with our facial therapy specialists at a later date. The core of this treatment is highly specialised home exercise programmes.
- A range of different surgeries are possible. This may include surgery to help with blinking and eye closure if this is an issue for you. If you have no smile and no chance of recovery then you may be offered surgery to give you a small smile.
- For some patients it may be a combination of therapy and surgery.
- For a small number of patients surgery will be the only option.
- Botox may be offered in combination with physiotherapy and or surgery.

The details of these options will be discussed with you during your consultation. A treatment plan will be agreed between you and the facial palsy team so that you leave the hospital with an outline of your treatment.

Should you have any questions or concerns please contact **Mr Nduka's secretary** on 01342 414190.

Your first appointment with the Facial Palsy Team

Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or a different format.

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