

Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) Specialty: Facial Palsy Plastics Clinic

Telephone: 01342 414000
Email: qvh.facialpalsy@nhs.net

This leaflet explains how you can access further clinic appointments for your facial palsy if required. If this leaflet does not answer your questions or concerns, please speak to your therapist.

What is patient initiated follow up?

- Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) is when a patient (or their carer) can request an additional follow up clinic appointment (if required) for a set period of time.
- This means if you decide you still need treatment after all, you can contact us and we will make another appointment for you to be seen.
- You will be able to book an additional clinic appointment (if required) for the length of time agreed with your clinician and in your letter.
- The reason we offer this service is that we want to give you more confidence, choice and flexibility in your care. It also reduces the number of unnecessary visits to the hospital and reduces waiting times for appointments.

How does patient initiated follow up work?

- If PIFU is suitable for you, your clinician will discuss your condition with you and move your care onto a PIFU pathway.
- Instead of being given a follow up appointment which you may not need, you will be able to contact the service directly to arrange a follow up appointment if you feel you need it.
- Your clinician will agree how long you will stay on this PIFU pathway with you.
- If you do not need to see a clinician about your condition whilst you are on the PIFU pathway and reach the end of the agreed time, we will discharge you back to your GP.
- If you need to be seen again in the future your GP can always re-refer you.

What do I need to do?

- If you experience any problems with your condition after being moved to the PIFU pathway, please contact us to request a follow up appointment. Examples of reasons to contact us are:
 - You're struggling with your home facial maintenance programme and feel your facial condition is getting worse again
 - You have noticed that your facial function (e.g. eating, drinking, speaking) has got a lot worse
 - Your face has become a lot more uncomfortable
 - Your eye has become a lot more uncomfortable or you are worried about the health of your eye
 - You have had a recurrence of your facial palsy (i.e. your face has become paralysed again)
 - Your facial condition has made your mental health a lot worse than it has been previously. If you answer yes to this question we advise you to consult your GP without delay. If you have immediate concerns about your psychological well-being or safety in any way, seek support from your local services such as the Accident and Emergency (A&E) department. You could also consider phoning Samaritans who provide a free, 24-hour, confidential emotional support help line on 116 123. We regret we are not able to provide crisis mental health care at QVH

- Should you have other symptoms that suggest a medical emergency please do not hesitate to call 111 or 999.

To book an appointment:

1. Call the appointment team.
 - *The department opening hours are 9am to 5pm Monday – Friday*
 - *Telephone 01342 414000 and ask to be put through to your Consultant's secretary, or email qvh.facialpalsy@nhs.net*
2. *Explain that you are on a Facial Palsy Clinic PIFU pathway*
3. *If leaving a voicemail or emailing please include:*
 - *Your full name and date of birth*
 - *Your hospital number and/or NHS number*
 - *A telephone number where we can call you*
 - *Date of your last appointment (if known)*
4. We will then arrange an appointment date and time.
5. Attend your appointment.

Frequently asked questions

- **How long will I have to wait before I receive an appointment?**
 - Because you are on the PIFU pathway, we will book you the next available appointment.
- **Could I get lost in the system?**
 - No. You are on a dedicated PIFU pathway and we check this regularly. If you do not need to see the clinician at all while you are on the pathway, we will discharge you back to your GP who can re-refer you in the future if required. This will not affect any appointment with other services at the hospital.
- **Why have you set a deadline for me to make an appointment?**
 - Your clinician determines the length of time that you will remain on the PIFU pathway. This depends on your condition.
- **When is PIFU not appropriate?**
 - PIFU is only appropriate for the condition for which we have treated you. For anything else, you will need to contact your GP or NHS 111 for advice.
 - PIFU is not suitable for providing urgent medical advice. In such a case you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local walk-in centre or, if you are really unwell, your local Accident and Emergency Department (A&E).

If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH, please visit www.supportqvh.org



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