

## Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

**Specialty: Facial Therapy**  
**Telephone: 01342 414004**  
**Email: [qvh.therapy@nhs.net](mailto:qvh.therapy@nhs.net)**

This leaflet explains how you can access further support and advice in Facial Therapy 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 therapy appointment (if required) for a set period of time.
- This means if you are not confident with your therapy programme, your circumstances change (e.g. you receive your date for surgery) or you have further problems related to your facial palsy, you can contact us and we will make another appointment for you to be seen.
- You will be able to book an additional therapy appointment (if required) for the length of time agreed with your therapist 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 are not confident with your therapy programme, your circumstances change (e.g. you receive your date for surgery) or you have further problems related to your facial palsy please contact us to arrange another appointment.
- 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 or email the therapy appointment team.
  - *The department opening hours are 8am to 4pm Monday – Friday*
  - *Telephone 01342 414004 or email [qvh.therapy@nhs.net](mailto:qvh.therapy@nhs.net)*
2. Explain that you are on a 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 between 8am and 4pm
  - Date of your last appointment (if known)
  - If having surgery please also include your planned operation date
4. We will then arrange an appointment date and time.
  - *Please note: the administrator may need to liaise with the therapist and call you back to confirm.*
5. Attend your appointment.
  - *Please note: this could be a video or face-to-face 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. If you are having surgery, your booking will follow the post-surgical guidelines.
- **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).