

Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

Specialty: Community Cardiology

Telephone: 01342 414482 (clinic appointments line)

Email: qvh.cardiologyteam@nhs.net

This leaflet explains how you can access further support and advice from the Community Cardiology service if required. If this leaflet does not answer your questions or concerns, please speak to your clinician.

What is patient initiated follow up?

- Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) is when a patient (or their carer) can request an additional follow up appointment (if required) for a set period of time.
- This means if you have worries or concerns following your consultation in the outpatient clinic or you have further problems related to your condition, you can contact us and we will make another appointment for you to be seen.
- You will be able to book an additional appointment (if required) for the length of time agreed with your healthcare professional and in your accompanying 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 of the below problems with your condition after being moved to the PIFU pathway, please contact us to request a follow up appointment:

- Worsening of breathlessness symptoms
- Reduction in exercise tolerance; feeling less active than usual
- Worsening fluid retention i.e. leg swelling
- Unexplained weight gain; more than 4lb or 2kg over 3 days
- Breathlessness at night; needing more pillows to sleep
- Significant change from your usual blood pressure and pulse rate range
- Worsening dizziness or feeling faint
- Concerns from carers of family members

The below symptoms are not suitable for a PIFU follow up and you should seek urgent medical attention by attending your local A&E or calling 999:

- Severe breathlessness (for example unable to speak in full sentences)
- Severe chest pain
- Collapse, fainting or loss of consciousness
- Extremely high or low pulse rate (for example less than 50 beats per minute or greater than 110 beats per minute)
- High temperatures (greater than 38C) or rigors (shivering)
- Change in mental status i.e. increased confusion

To book an appointment:

1. Call or email the appointment team
 - The department opening hours are 8.30am to 4pm Monday – Friday
 - Telephone 01342 414482 or email qvh.cardiologyteam@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 8.30am and 4pm
 - Date of your last appointment (if known)
4. We will then arrange an appointment date and time.
 - Please note: the administrator may need to liaise with the clinician and call you back to confirm
5. Attend your appointment.
 - Please note: this could be a video, telephone 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.

Could I get lost in the system?

No. You are on a dedicated PIFU pathway and we check this regularly. This will not affect any appointment with other services at the hospital. 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. If, however, you are undergoing routine surveillance tests, such as annual echocardiograms, the clinician will review your surveillance results and write to you with the outcome, including an updated PIFU timeframe should it need to be extended.

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

