NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Dermatology Patient-Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

PIFU direct line: 0118 322 8145 *option 1*

rbb-tr.cat8dermatology@nhs.net

https://patients.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/

This leaflet explains what the Dermatology Patient-Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU) service is and how it can help you manage your condition.

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

Patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you, the patient, in control of when you are seen by the Dermatology Department.

Attending regular outpatient appointments scheduled by the hospital can cause unnecessary anxiety – e.g. time taken to travel, park and wait for the appointment – if your condition is stable.

Sometimes, regular outpatient appointments may not result in any change to your treatment. In fact, your condition may flare up in between regular booked appointments and it is during this time that you really do need our input. PIFU will put you in control of making an appointment when you need it the most.

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

How does PIFU work?

The Dermatology Team will advise you whether your condition is now suitable to have your follow-ups via PIFU, rather than regular appointments scheduled by the hospital.

Your clinician will have advised you about the process and given you this patient information leaflet for you to consider if you want to have your follow-ups in this way; **it is your decision**.

If I do not opt for PIFU, will you still monitor me?

If you do not require a follow-up appointment within the 12 months on the PIFU pathway, we will discharge you back to the care of your GP. We will write to you and your GP when this happens.

If you have any concerns associated with your condition (but not a flare up), contact the Speciality Advice Line on 0118 322 8145 option 1.

When should I arrange a PIFU?

If you experience a flare-up of the condition which you initially saw us with, then please contact us directly. You can request an appointment via the Royal Berkshire Connect Patient Portal. Once the team has reviewed your request, we will send you a text message informing you of your new appointment. Please do not contact us regarding a new or different dermatology condition.

Requesting a PIFU appointment:

Booking an appointment to see the team is a quick and easy process. If you have a flare up of your symptoms and need advice or an appointment, you can request an appointment via the Royal Berkshire Connect Patient Portal.

- You will receive a text message inviting you to register with the Royal Berkshire Connect Patient Portal.
- If you have not already registered, please follow the on-screen instructions to register. If you are already registered, continue to log into the portal.
- Once logged in, review your patient-initiated follow-up appointment request screen and any documentation provided. Complete the attached questionnaires and submit your request for an appointment.
- Alternatively, if you don't have internet access, you can telephone to request a PIFU appointment using the number on the front of this booklet (Mon-Fri 8am-4pm).
- Our clinical administration team will arrange an appointment for you as soon as possible and you will get a text to confirm the date and time. You can view the status of your request at any time by logging into the patient portal.

If you want any more information about Royal Berkshire Connect, visit https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/royal-berkshire-connect

If you prefer to call or email us:

1. **Call the Dermatology Team on 0118 322 8145 option 1 (between 8am and 4pm) or email rbb-tr.cat8dermatology@nhs.net**
2. **Explain to the team that you need a PIFU appointment.**
3. **Agree an appointment date and time.**
4. **Attend your clinic appointment.**

In the event 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 where we can call you Monday to Friday between 8am-4pm.
- ✓ Date of your last specialist appointment.

When not to use PIFU

If you require urgent medical advice, you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local walk-in/urgent care centre or, if you are really unwell, your local Emergency Department (A&E) via NHS 111 or 999. Please also do not use the PIFU appointment for a new dermatology condition or problem; please see your GP about this.

Can I change my mind about this style of follow-up?

Just tell us and we will go back to booking regular hospital appointments for you to attend for your review. Please discuss any concerns with a member of the team who will be happy to help.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Dermatology, September 2026. Next review due: September 2028.