



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Respiratory Medicine Patient- Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU)

Information for patients,
relatives and carers

PIFU Direct Tel: 0118 322 6676

Royal Berkshire Connect

This leaflet explains what the Respiratory Medicine 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 Respiratory Medicine 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. Your condition may flare up after a period of stability, and it is during this time that you really do need our input. PIFU will put you in control of requesting an appointment when you need it.

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

How does PIFU work?

You will be advised by the Respiratory Medicine Team 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.**

How would I request a PIFU appointment?

Requesting an appointment to see the team is a quick and easy process.

If you have worsening or ongoing symptoms and need advice or an appointment, just call the number on the cover of this leaflet, or you

can request one via the Royal Berkshire Connect Patient Portal.

Requesting a PIFU appointment:

- Log onto PPUK, Royal Berkshire Connect Patient Portal <https://patients.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/>, review your PIFU 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-5pm).



Please provide the following information:

- ✓ Your full name and date of birth.
- ✓ Your hospital number and/or NHS number.
- ✓ **Date of your last specialist appointment.**

A member of our administration team will contact your consultant for you within 2-3 working days.

Your consultant will review your case and arrange an appropriate appointment for you, which may be a telephone call, a clinic appointment or some tests.

Our next available appointments are usually in about 6 weeks, apart from a few urgent ones. This service is not suitable for getting immediate treatment for exacerbations and chest infections and this needs to be dealt in the usual way through your GP surgery or using rescue packs etc.

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

If appropriate, we will arrange a follow-up appointment after a year to check that your condition is still stable. For some people with stable illnesses, we will discharge you if you haven't needed to contact us in 2 years of being on the PIFU pathway. We will write to you and your GP

if this happens. Your consultant and you will decide about whether you are happy to be discharged without a final appointment when the PIFU process is discussed.

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

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

When should I arrange a PIFU?

Call if you feel your condition is gradually worsening, your symptoms of cough and shortness of breath are not responding to your treatments, or if you have had more frequent infections or exacerbations than usual.

When not to use PIFU

If you require urgent medical advice, you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local Walk-in centre or, if you are really unwell, your local Emergency Department (A&E) via NHS 111 or 999.

This service is not suitable for getting immediate treatment for exacerbations and chest infections. These need to be dealt in the usual way through your GP surgery or using rescue packs etc.

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 Respiratory Medicine Department, September 2026.

Next review due: September 2028