

## **Will I continue to have routine mammograms, and how will I receive the results?**

Yes, if applicable to you, you will continue to be called for yearly mammograms for at least five years after your treatment has finished, or until you are in your 50<sup>th</sup> year and can join the national NHS Breast Screening Programme.

Your mammogram result will be sent to you by letter and the next mammogram will automatically be booked, if applicable.

If as a result of your specific treatment you do not need to have annual mammograms, you and your GP will be informed about this.

## **Are there any other regular tests that I may need to have?**

You and your GP will be told if you need any additional regular checks, such as bone density scans (DEXA). These scans can tell us if you are developing bone thinning which could lead to a condition called osteoporosis. These will be organised by the OAFU team whilst you remain on the OAFU pathway, and following discharge via your GP. The results of the DEXA scan will be sent to you and your GP, with clear instructions on what you may need.

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To find out more about our Trust visit  
[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

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

Breast care nurses, December 2021  
Next review due: December 2023



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## **Welcome to the Open Access Follow-Up Pathway (OAFU)**

Information for patients

Helpline: 0118 322 7420

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## **This leaflet explains the Open Access Follow-Up (OAFU) Pathway for patients that have been treated for primary breast cancer at the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.**

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### **What is the Open Access Follow-Up Pathway?**

It is a standard follow-up system for patients with a diagnosis of breast cancer, which means that means you will continue to receive annual appointments for mammograms (if required), but you do not need annual follow-up appointments in an outpatient clinic. In between your mammograms, you can access support and advice from the Breast Care Team throughout the time you are on the OAFU pathway.

### **What is the benefit of the Open Access Follow-Up Pathway?**

Your normal routine will not be interrupted by hospital appointments when you are feeling perfectly well. Instead, you can quickly gain access to support from the Breast Care Team when you need it. Evidence shows that traditional face to face appointments can be a

source of anxiety and that it can be tempting to put off reporting worrying signs and symptoms if a routine appointment is 'not too far away.'

It has also been proven that new problems are unlikely to be picked up by clinical examination alone. Most are identified by patients themselves, in between routine appointments.

### **Is the Royal Berkshire Hospital the only hospital to have an OAFU Clinic?**

More and more hospitals across the country have changed the way patients are followed up after treatment for breast cancer, and the Open Access Follow-Up Pathway has proved successful in the hospitals that have introduced this way of running follow-ups.

### **What happens next?**

You will be sent a 'treatment summary', with information about your diagnosis and treatment, as well as how your follow-up care will be organised. The treatment summary includes:

- The dates of your future mammogram, if needed.
- The date you should complete your hormone treatment, if applicable to you.

- The dates of bone density (DEXA) scans, if applicable to you.
- Being breast and body aware, and any signs or symptoms you should report to the Breast Care Team or your GP.
- Details of how to contact the Breast Care Team

### **How do I contact the Breast Care Team if I have a concern?**

You can call the Breast Care Team on **0118 322 7420** between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Please leave a short message including your **name, hospital number and telephone number** on the answer phone. A member of the team will call you back within 48 hours to talk through the symptoms or concerns that you have.

If they feel it would be appropriate for you to come back to clinic to be seen, you will be offered an appropriate clinic appointment. Sometimes, verbal advice may replace the need for an appointment. This advice will also be recorded in correspondence to you and to your GP.