



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Upper Limb Patient- Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU)

Information for patients,
relatives and carers

PIFU direct tel: 0118 322 7415

This leaflet explains what the Upper Limb (shoulder and elbow) 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 Upper Limb Unit.

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 Upper Limb 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.**

How would I book a PIFU appointment?

Booking an appointment to see the team is a quick and easy process. Just call the number on the cover of this leaflet and a member of our administration team will arrange an appointment for you within a reasonable time frame depending on clinical urgency.

If I do opt for PIFU, how long will you monitor me?

If you do not require a follow-up appointment in the first **6 months** of being on the PIFU pathway, then we will discharge you back to the care of your GP.

When should I arrange a PIFU?

You should call if you experience a flare-up or recurrence of your symptoms and need to be seen in the clinic.

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.

How do I make a PIFU appointment?

If your symptoms flare up or recur, or you need advice or an appointment, just follow the steps overleaf and the team will help you.

Four easy steps:

- 1 Call the Upper Limb Team (CAT 5) on 0118 322 7415 (between 9am and 5pm).**
- 2 Explain to the team that you need to have a PIFU follow-up 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 during normal hours between 8am – 4pm.
- ✓ **Date of your last specialist appointment.**

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

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

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