

Information for patients and carers

Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy bands of blue. The top band is a light blue, the middle is a medium blue, and the bottom is a dark blue.

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 heart failure nurses. It means spending less time attending hospital appointments, but still having access to clinical support when you need it.

When your heart failure is well controlled on optimum medications, follow up appointments are unlikely to result in any changes to your treatment, but you will have spent time and energy putting arrangements in place to attend your appointment.

Consequently, we do not need to review you routinely. However, you have been identified as someone that may benefit from alternative treatment if you experience worsening Heart Failure signs/symptoms, and at this point may require our input.

With PIFU, you can report changes in heart failure signs and symptoms and get advice from our clinical team, who may recommend treatment adjustments and / or suggest an appointment is required.

It will be for you to initiate the follow-up appointment rather than the hospital, which is why this process is called patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU).

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

How will I know if I am suitable for PIFU?

The heart failure team will advise you if your condition is now suitable for PIFU instead of regular appointments scheduled by the hospital.

This is for you to decide. Alternatively, you may prefer to refer to your GP and for him or her to contact our team. Your clinician will have advised you about the PIFU process and given you this patient leaflet to support you.

When should I call PIFU?

If you have worsening heart failure symptoms and need advice or an appointment, just follow the steps below.

Criteria for action	Symptoms	Action
RED: TAKE ACTION Not suitable for contacting the PIFU service	Severe breathlessness, chest pain, palpitations and syncope, symptoms of infection, other medical conditions worsening, transient loss of consciousness, feeling confused about medication, diarrhoea or vomiting for more than 24 hours	Urgent advice from GP or dial 999 or NHS 111 out of hours
AMBER: STAY ALERT Suitable for PIFU help and support	Weight increase by four pounds or two kilograms over 3 days AND feeling more breathless than usual, leg swelling, breathless at night, needing more pillows to sleep, less active than usual, feeling muddled, other conditions are worsening, carer is unwell and unable to look after the patient	Contact the heart failure team on 01257 247588

<p>GREEN: KEEP WATCH Suitable for PIFU help and support</p>	<p>Weight has increased/not increased by four pounds or two kilograms over three days BUT no more breathless than usual, ankles no more swollen than normal, all medical conditions are stable, active, and mobile as normal, carer is well and able to look after the patient</p>	<p>Contact the heart failure team if you want advice on 01257 247588</p>
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PIFU is not a replacement for urgent medical advice. If you require urgent medical advice, you should contact your GP, NHS 111 or if you are unwell, your local Emergency Department (A&E).

How will I book a patient-initiated appointment?

This is a quick and easy process:

1. Call the heart failure team PIFU on telephone **01257 247588** (Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 4.00pm, excluding bank holidays) If 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 so we can call you back during our opening hours
- 2. Explain to the heart failure team that you are experiencing worsening heart failure symptoms and that you need some clinical advice.
- 3. The team will review your concerns and decide whether you need immediate clinical advice for your symptoms or if you need an appointment.
- 4. If the team think you need an appointment, we will contact you to agree an appointment date and time. In most cases we will arrange an appointment for you within 10 working days.
- 5. Attend your clinic appointment.

Will you still be looking after me if I am on PIFU and do not initiate an appointment?

Yes, you will still have follow-up appointments with us. We will arrange a follow-up appointment after a year to check that your condition is still stable.

If you have any concerns associated with your condition, you can contact the heart failure nursing team on telephone number: **01257 247588** - Monday – Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm (non-urgent calls only).

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team. If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.

This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

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Division: Medicine

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