

Patient Initiated Follow-up: giving you control to book your own follow-up hospital appointments

Introduction

In the past, the NHS would automatically book face to face follow-up appointments at fixed periods for people after hospital treatment or if they had a long-term condition. But these appointments were not always needed.

Now you can decide if and when you need a follow-up appointment, by using Patient Initiated Follow-up (PIFU).

What is PIFU?

PIFU is a service which enables you to be in control and make your own decisions about appointments.

What are the benefits of PIFU?

- It puts you in control of making an appointment to see your Hospital Team.
- You or your carer can arrange a follow up appointment when you feel you need one.
- You will have direct access to support if you need it.
- PIFU appointments can help reduce unnecessary visits to hospital, reduce waiting times and release hospital teams to see more patients.
- You or your carer can make an appointment to see your Hospital Team if you have any concerns about your condition or symptoms.
- It avoids you having regular review appointments when you do not want or need them.
- The appointment could be by telephone, video or face to face.
- PIFU helps you avoid making unnecessary journeys to hospital.

Does everyone get offered PIFU?

No. PIFU is not suitable for everyone. You can discuss any concerns you may have about PIFU with your Hospital Team.

How does PIFU work?

- Your Healthcare Professional will discuss your condition with you.
- Your name will be added to the PIFU appointment list if it is the right decision for you.

- Instead of being given routine follow-up appointments, you will be able to contact the service directly to arrange a follow-up appointment if you feel you need it.
- You will be told how long you will stay on the PIFU waiting list. This will be decided by your clinical condition.

How will I know when I need a PIFU?

Your Healthcare Professional will advise you about the symptoms you need to watch out for and when it is right for you to make an appointment.

The signs and symptoms that you will need to look out for, along with a contact telephone number, will be provided in your clinic letter or post-surgery discharge summary.

How long does PIFU last?

After an agreed amount of time, it may be that you do not need to see your Hospital Team about your condition. You will then be discharged. Your GP can refer you again if needed in the future.

How do I book a follow-up appointment?

You will be provided with the details in your clinic letter or post-surgery discharge summary.

When should I not use PIFU?

- If your concern is related to a different condition or symptom.
- If you have been discharged, you will need to see your GP.
- If you require urgent medical help, you should contact your GP or NHS111.

How do I find out more?

If you want to know more about PIFU or understand if it is right for you, you can speak to your Hospital Team.

Please remember it is important that you are available for any arranged appointment. If you are not available, please tell your Hospital Team in advance so they can try to give your appointment to someone else.

