

## Patient Initiated Follow Up – General Surgery Gallstone / Hernia / Colorectal

**Specialty: General Surgery**

**Pathway: Gallstone / Hernia / Colorectal**

**Tel: 0300 131 4600**

### Following your outpatient appointment

This information explains ways in which you can continue to access support and advice about your health following your outpatient appointment in General Surgery. If you have any concerns or questions that are not answered in this leaflet, please speak to your healthcare professional.

### What is patient initiated follow-up?

Patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you in control of a further follow-up appointment. Instead of being offered regular routine follow up appointments, you can make an appointment to see us if/ when you have worries or concerns following your consultation in the outpatient clinic. You will be given 'open access' to the clinic for a period of 12 months from the date of your outpatient appointment, which means that if you feel worried and/or you have further problems related to your original appointment, you can contact us and we will make an appointment for you to be seen within 2 months.

The reason we offer follow-up this way is because we want to give you the patient more choice and flexibility and reduce unwanted and unnecessary visits to the hospital. This will help improve your patient experience, reduce cost of travel & parking, reduce waiting times for appointments and help us to decrease our carbon footprint by reducing the number of unnecessary journeys made to our hospitals.

### How does patient initiated follow up work?

If PIFU is suitable for you, your clinician will discuss your condition with you and add your name to a PIFU list. Instead of being given routine follow-up clinic appointments at regular intervals, you will be able to contact the service directly to arrange a follow-up appointment if you feel you need it. Your clinician will tell you how long you will stay on this PIFU plan as it is determined by your clinical condition.

If you do not need to see a clinician about your condition within the specified period after your last appointment, you will be discharged back to your GP who will re-refer you if you need to be seen again in the future.

### What do I need to do?

If you experience any problems with your condition, or complications after treatment, please contact us to arrange an out-patient appointment. The most common symptom for this pathway that should trigger a follow up appointment could be:

- Significant abdominal pain (Gallstone / Hernia)
- Symptoms related to your condition that have worsened (Gallstone / Hernia)
- You feel you are not recovering well from your operation (Gallstone / Hernia)
- If haemorrhoids reoccur (Colorectal)

However, should you have other symptoms that suggest a medical emergency please do not hesitate to call 111 or 999.

### To book an appointment:

1. Call the (please tick):
  - Booking Team on 0300 131 4600 (9am to 5pm Mon – Fri).
  - Medical Secretary on ph: \_\_\_\_\_ (9am to 5pm Mon – Fri).
2. Explain that you are on a PIFU plan
3. Agree an appointment date and time. *(Please note: the administrator may need to liaise with the service and call you back to confirm)*
4. Attend your clinic appointment. *(Please note: this could be a face-to-face, telephone or video 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 – 5pm.
- Date of your last appointment (if known).

### Frequently asked questions

- **What if I cannot get through to make an appointment?**  
If you cannot get through using the contact details above, please contact the Central Outpatient Booking team on 0300 131 4600 and they will be able to redirect you.
- **How long will I have to wait before I receive an appointment?**  
Because you are on the PIFU pathway, if you need to be seen because your symptoms worsen, you will be given priority and booked in as soon as possible.
- **Could I get lost in the system?**  
No. You will be on a dedicated list for PIFU, which will be checked regularly. If you do not need to see the clinician at all within the specified period after your last appointment, you will be discharged back to your GP who will re-refer you if you need to be seen again in the future.
- **Why have you set a deadline for me to make an appointment?**  
The length of time that you will remain on the PIFU plan is determined by your clinician as it depends on your condition and their clinical judgement on how long each patient will need before they can be discharged back to their GP where care may be more appropriately provided.
- **When is PIFU not appropriate?**
  - PIFU is not appropriate for conditions or symptoms unrelated to the condition you were seen for originally: for these you will need to contact your GP or NHS111 for advice.
  - Neither is it suitable for providing urgent medical advice: in such a case you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local Walk-in centre or, if you are really unwell, your local Emergency Department (A&E).

## Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Other formats

**If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:  
Jade Bowyer, Miss Naomi Cording, Miss DC Jenner

The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet:  
Division of Anaesthetics and Surgery

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Responsible clinician/author: Heidi King, Service Delivery Manager

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