

General Surgery Directorate

Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

This leaflet is to provide you with useful information about what patient initiated follow up (PIFU) is and assist you with deciding whether you need to contact the General Surgery team.

What is 'Patient Initiated Follow Up' (PIFU)?

- Patient initiated follow up gives you control over your follow up.
- You or your carer can initiate a follow up appointment when you feel you need one due to symptoms which you may have, or when your circumstances may have changed.
- You will have direct access to guidance when you need it the most, as opposed to attending a follow up within a set timeframe which you may not need.

The General Surgery PIFU service offers

Open access to advice, support, and appointments as and when you need them. These may be via telephone or video call, or face to face, based on your individual needs and circumstances.

How is PIFU beneficial to you?

- You won't be making any unnecessary journeys to the hospital to attend a follow up appointment that you may not really need. You will only have a consultation if you feel you need to be seen.
- It gives you direct access to the clinic within a specified time frame without needing to be referred by your GP.

How do I make an appointment?

Making an appointment is easy, you just need to call the number provided at the bottom of this leaflet. Please provide your NHS number when you call, which can be found at the top of any hospital letter.

What symptoms should I get advice about?

Below details the symptoms to look out for, if you experience any of the symptoms within the timeframe detailed then you can contact the team on the below number.

If you have not needed to ask for a further appointment during the period detailed below, then you will be discharged from the service and will need to contact your GP to be re-referred.

Treatment	Symptoms	Time prior to being discharged
Acute appendicitis treated conservatively.	Reoccurrence of right abdominal pain – “the same pain”.	3 Months
Fissure-in-Ano treatment	Continuing pain when emptying bowels, bleeding on paper more than once per week after treatment course finished (8 weeks).	6 months
Low Fistula-in-ano treatment	Discharge/bleeding or cyclical perianal pain beyond 8 weeks after treatment.	6 months
Conservatively managed abdominal wall hernia	Increasing symptoms interfering with activities from daily life and wish to undergo surgery.	6 months
Laparotomy for perforated ulcer / small bowel obstruction	Failure of wound to heal; failure to thrive (ongoing weight loss / anorexia / pain) beyond 2 months post-operatively.	6 months
Haemorrhoidectomy	Pain, bleeding, continued prolapse for more than 2 months post-procedure.	6 months
Incision and Drainage of abscess (perianal, pilonidal)	Failure to heal, ongoing discharge or pain beyond 2 months.	6 months

When you should NOT use PIFU

If you require urgent medical attention, you should contact your GP, NHS 111 or attend the Emergency Department if you are really unwell.

For medical problems that are not related to this speciality, your GP remains your first point of contact.

If you wish to access PIFU, please call the team on:

Telephone – 01902 481891