

General Paediatrics Service

Patient/Parent Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

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

01902 695 200

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

- Patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you, in control of when you and your child are supported by the paediatrics team. It means spending less time attending hospital appointments, but still having access to specialist clinical input when you need it.
- You can initiate a follow up appointment when you feel your child needs one due to a change in their condition or circumstances, or if their symptoms are causing them trouble.
- 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 may not be needed.
- If your child's condition is stable, you may not find it helpful to attend regular outpatient appointments scheduled by the hospital. Sometimes, these appointments may not result in any change to your child's treatment, but you will have spent time and energy putting arrangements in place to attend your appointment.

The Paediatrics 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 attending a follow up appointment which may not really be needed. You will only have an appointment made if you feel you need or want one for your child.
- You have more control over your child's care and how an appointment is initiated as opposed to attending follow up appointments at fixed routine intervals. We will aim to see you within a small number of weeks after you get in touch.

How do I make an appointment?

Making an appointment is easy; you just need to call the booking team on the number provided at the start and end of this leaflet. Please provide your child's NHS number when you call, which can be found at the top of any hospital letter. Please briefly explain that you need some clinical advice and are on PIFU.

In most cases we will arrange an appointment for you within 8 weeks. Sometimes it will be most appropriate to support you by having a remote consultation over the telephone or video link, but an in-person appointment may also be arranged if necessary.

Please note, to arrange a patient-initiated follow-up appointment with the paediatrics team, you must have previously agreed with your paediatric specialist that this is the right pathway for your child. The appointment can only be arranged for the specific condition discussed. Any new issues will need to be discussed with your GP or care provider.

What symptoms should I get advice about?

The paediatrics team will outline the most important situations that should prompt you to contact them by PIFU. That does not mean that you cannot contact them at other times if you think you need to. Some of the most common queries are:

- If you wish to return to regular follow-up appointments instead of PIFU
- An increase in symptoms for the condition for which your child is being treated.
- An increase in the severity of symptoms for which your child is being treated.
- New, different or change in symptom pattern for the condition for which your child is being treated.
- A query re: medication dosing, timing, duration of treatment or new side effects.

If you call regarding a different issue to the one for which your child has been given a PIFU pathway, your query will be forwarded to a consultant for advice; in these circumstances you may be advised to attend a primary care team/GP instead.

When you should NOT use PIFU

If your child requires urgent medical attention, you should contact your GP, NHS 111 or attend A&E if they are very unwell. For medical problems that are not related to this speciality, your GP remains your first point of contact.

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