

## MS Service

### Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU)

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

For New Cross, Cannock and West Park patients – **07990 777518**

For Royal Shrewsbury, Princess Royal and Donnington patients - **01952 641 222, extension 4817**

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

- Patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you, the patient, in control of when you are supported by the neurology team. It means spending less time attending hospital appointments, but still having access to specialist clinical input when you need it.
- You or your carer can initiate your follow up appointment when you feel you need one due to a change in your condition or circumstances, or if your symptoms are causing you 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 you may not need.
- If your 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 treatment, but you'll have spent time and energy putting arrangements in place to attend your appointment.

#### **The MS PIFU service offers:**

Open access to advice, support, and appointments as and when you need them. These may be via telephone or face to face, based on your individual needs and circumstances. This will be available to you for 3 years, and if you do not need to access it during this period and have no further concerns, you will be discharged from our care. After this time, if you need to see us again, you can still do so via your GP.

### **How is PIFU beneficial to you?**

- You won't be making any unnecessary journeys to the hospital attending a follow up appointment which you may not really need. You will only have a consultation if you feel you need or want one.
- You have more control over your care and how an appointment is initiated as opposed to attending your follow up appointments at fixed routine intervals. We will aim to see you within a small number of weeks after you get in touch.
- It gives you direct access to the clinic without needing to be referred by your GP for a fixed period.

### **How do I make an appointment?**

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

The team will review your message and act accordingly. If the team think you need an appointment, we will contact you to agree an appointment date and time. This appointment may be via the telephone or face to face depending on the nature of your call. We will endeavour to offer you an appointment as soon as possible.

Please note, to arrange a patient-initiated follow-up appointment with the MS team, you must have previously agreed with your MS specialist that this is the right pathway for you.

### **What symptoms should I get advice about?**

The MS 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:

- Concerns or questions about treatment side effects or changes
- Concerns or questions over new MS symptoms
- If you are pregnant, or are planning or considering pregnancy
- If you wish to return to regular follow-up appointments instead of PIFU

**When you should NOT use PIFU**

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

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