

Patient Initiated

Follow Up

Information for patients

This leaflet provides information for patients who have attended an outpatient clinic at Royal United Hospitals Bath and have been offered a 'patient-initiated follow-up appointment'. It explains what a patient initiated follow up is, how it works, and gives you the information you need to contact your service to arrange a follow up appointment for yourself. We hope you find it helps you to feel confident to be in control of your own follow up.

If you would like further information or have any particular worries, please do not hesitate to ask your healthcare professional.

What is a patient initiated follow up appointment?

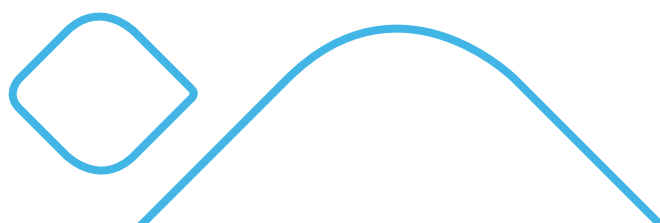
A patient initiated follow up (PIFU for short) allows you to arrange follow up appointments as and when you need them.

This puts you in control of your hospital follow up and gives you direct access to guidance when you most need it.

How does a patient initiated follow up work?

If PIFU is suitable for you, your clinician will add your name to a PIFU list. 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 list.

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



Why do you offer this type of follow up?

There are a number of benefits to PIFU. These include:

- PIFU puts you in control of your own outpatient follow up.
- Patients frequently spend time and money to attend appointments that are not essential. The number of people making these journeys will be greatly reduced and we hope it will improve your experience.
- Freeing up appointments means we can reduce the waiting times for people who need an appointment, enabling them to be seen more quickly.
- It will also help us to cut down our carbon footprint by reducing the number of unnecessary journeys made to our hospital.

What do I need to do?

If you experience any problems with your condition, or complications after treatment, please contact us to arrange an outpatient appointment. Your clinician will tell you what you need to watch out for.

General information will also be available on our website.

Frequently Asked Questions

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 waiting list for PIFU. If you do not need to see the doctor or nurse at all within the specified period after your last appointment, you will be discharged back to your GP who can 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?

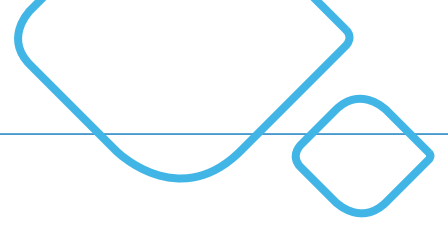
- The length of time that you will remain on the PIFU waiting list is determined by your clinician as it depends on your condition and their clinical judgement on how long each patient will need before they can be discharged back to their GP.

How do I book a patient initiated follow up appointment?

To book an appointment, call the Booking Team on the number on your clinic letter (in the PIFU paragraph) and ask for a “patient-initiated follow-up appointment”. Please note that if you speak to an administrator, secretary or receptionist, they cannot give clinical advice.

To arrange a patient-initiated follow-up appointment you must:

- Have been told this is appropriate for you there will be instructions at the end of your clinic letter following your appointment with your clinician.



-
- Contact us within the timeframe advised by your clinician
 - Please remember that it is important that you are available for your appointment. If you find you cannot attend, please tell us in advance so we can try to give your appointment slot to someone else. Failure to let us know you won't be attending may lead to you being discharged back to your GP.

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG

01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on 01225 825656.

Date of publication: October 2025 | Ref: RUH GAS/173
© Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust