

# Preparing for your Telephone Appointment

As a result of the COVID pandemic we have changed many of our outpatient hospital appointments to telephone appointments.

**The following guidance has been written by a patient, who has had telephone appointments, to help you to prepare for your telephone appointment.**

For many patients the change to telephone appointments may feel a little intimidating and stressful. As with all telephone conversations, there may be natural silences and at times it may be difficult to concentrate. However, always tell the health professional if you don't understand any terminology, always express any concerns you may have, and ask questions.

## Before your telephone appointment

- Make a list of all of your concerns and questions, highlighting key words to help you remember them.
- Make a list of all your symptoms with the dates when they started.
- If possible, arrange for a relative or friend to be with you to listen and act as your 'assistant'; making notes or reminding you of questions.
- Have your device on speakerphone, if you have one, so you or your relative or friend can make notes.

## During your telephone appointment

- Do ask questions. They help us to clarify our thinking; what has been understood or may need to be explained.
- If there is anything you do not understand ask for it to be repeated and explained in a way that is clear and easy to understand.
- Tell the health professional if you have any concerns about treatment or medication.
- If you need tests, treatment or an operation ask how long you will need to wait.
- Ask what you can do at home to help yourself.



It is important that you come away from your telephone appointment understanding and feeling confident about the next steps in your treatment, if any is needed. Nobody wants to be left uncertain or anxious.

It is a really good idea to check your understanding of the discussion by repeating back to the health professional the main points they have talked to you about. If you don't feel able to do this ask your relative or friend to do this for you.

We hope you find this information useful.

To tell us about your experience of your telephone outpatient appointment please go to our website [www.ruh.nhs.uk/telluswhatyouthink](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/telluswhatyouthink)

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.