

Patient Initiated Follow up (PIFU) - Arthritis

Rheumatology Department
Lincoln, Boston, Grantham, Skegness, Spalding
PIFU appointments line (all sites): 01205 446422

www.ulh.nhs.uk

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk

What is Patient Initiated Follow up (PIFU)?

If you have arthritis, regular follow ups may not be necessary in some patients who are stable on treatment. Your time could be best utilised until you feel you need to see your Rheumatologist for assessment of your arthritis or changes to treatment.

The patient initiated follow up service empowers you and puts you in control of your arthritis and appointments.

When you feel you need to see your Rheumatologist or Specialist Nurse for a flare up of your arthritis, you will be able to contact the service directly to arrange for an appointment via the PIFU appointments line.

How might it affect you?

Some people feel relieved that they no longer need to be seen regularly in the Rheumatology Clinic and this can free up their time and puts them in control. However, some people may fear losing contact with the hospital. There is no risk of being lost because everyone will be registered to the service.

Will I get an appointment when I need it?

Yes. Appointment slots have been reserved each week for PIFU patients.

Is this service suitable for everyone?

This service is suitable for patients whose arthritis is stable on treatment and blood test monitoring has been satisfactory. Your suitability will be discussed with you in clinic by your Consultant Rheumatologist or Specialist Nurse. This could also be discussed in telephone clinics. You can opt out if you have strong reservations.

Will this be forever?

The Rheumatology Department will contact you after 2 years if you have not been in contact with the service to make sure that you are still happy with the treatment of your arthritis and arrange a face to face appointment if required.

What if I just need some advice?

You need to contact the Rheumatology Help Line number on 01522 573828. The PIFU contact number is for appointments only. No clinical advice will be given when you contact the PIFU appointments line.

When should I contact the service?

You should contact the PIFU appointments line if you feel that your arthritis has flared up and you need to be assessed in clinic. The symptoms of a flare up include swelling in the joints, increasing pain and stiffness in the joints and worsening fatigue.

Please tell the Appointments Clerk you are a Rheumatology PIFU patient and they will book you a mutually convenient appointment.

PIFU appointment line (for all sites): 01205 446422

Rheumatology help line (for all sites): 01522 573828