

## Rheumatology

### Infusion of therapeutic substance

#### Introduction

We are reviewing patients who have been waiting a long time to help us prioritise those in most urgent need. Please be assured we are doing our utmost to ensure you and your families get the treatment you require as soon as possible. If you used the NHS e-Referral Service to book your appointment it will have given you an indicative appointment and treatment waiting time.

This document will provide you with information on how you can support yourself whilst waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance and advice has been reviewed and approved by clinicians responsible for your care.

#### Guidance for patients

If you no longer require your appointment please let us know as soon as possible as that will allow us time to offer an earlier appointment to another patient. If you do not have the phone number for the specialty you will be reviewed in but would like to cancel, change your appointment or speak to a staff member please call our switchboard number and they will be able to direct your call to the correct specialty.

#### Wye Valley Trust – 01432 355444

Further links which may help you manage your condition whilst you await treatment;

- <https://www.patientaccess.com/> (Connect to your GP services online)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>

### Infusion of therapeutic substance

We use a number of infusion treatments to treat rheumatological conditions. This may be given as an urgent treatment, for example intravenous steroid to treat active inflammation or as a maintenance therapy, for example a biological treatment for the long term treatment of conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis. Maintenance treatments are booked via our biologics service and should happen at regular pre-determined intervals. Further information on these medications is available at

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/>

We also use regular treatments for the prevention of fractures in patients' with osteoporosis, for example Zoledronate. These treatments are managed through our osteoporosis service. Further information on these medications is available at <https://www.theros.org.uk/>

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# My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

## What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

### Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

### GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in symptoms, you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.

## Contact us

If the symptoms related to your rheumatoid condition are worsening – please see below for details of what to do.

If your rheumatological condition is more active or you are concerned you haven't had your infusion treatment at the appropriate time please contact the department using the contacts below:

Patients receiving biological therapies Rituximab/Tocilizumab/Infliximab/Abatacept please contact: 01432 355444 ext. 5794 or [wvt.rheumbiopatient@nhs.net](mailto:wvt.rheumbiopatient@nhs.net)

Patients receiving treatment for osteoporosis Zoledronate/Pamidronate please contact: 01432 355444 ext. 5461

Any email enquiries can be sent to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS); [pals@wvt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@wvt.nhs.uk)

If you feel that the hospital haven't been able to resolve your concerns after you have spoken to them about your waiting time, you can speak to our dedicated PALS team.

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