

Chronic Pain – First Outpatient Appointment

Introduction

This guidance document is for people who have been referred to the Chronic Pain service at Hereford County Hospital, and are waiting for an appointment.

Chronic pain is the term used to describe pain which has lasted longer than the usual healing time after an illness or injury – usually given as three to six months. Chronic pain can occur in any part of the body. It can be caused by an accident or injury. There are also many different health conditions that can lead to someone experiencing chronic pain, for example, arthritis. However, people can also experience chronic pain when there is no underlying condition. This is called chronic primary pain. Chronic pain can be a very complex problem.

Our Chronic Pain Team will triage your referral and identify if you should be seen by a Clinical Nurse Specialist or Consultant. They will also clinically assess the urgency of your referral based on the information required.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify exactly when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital for the surgery. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Some of the principles of self-management of long term pain are available from the following websites:

<https://www.flippinpain.co.uk/>

<https://livewellwithpain.co.uk/>

The NHS website on back pain may also be helpful:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/back-pain/>

Many patients do report an increase in the intensity of their pain while they are waiting for an intervention, however keeping mobile and active is important for your longer term health.

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. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

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 pain, you may wish to 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

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