

Patient initiated follow-up (PIFU)

What is PIFU?

PIFU describes when a patient requests and arranges their follow up appointments as and when they need them. This is based on their symptoms and individual circumstances.

It can be used in several specialties for patients with a range of long or short-term health conditions. It is not suitable for everyone and this is based on clinical need and individual circumstance.

If a patient is suitable for PIFU, a discussion should be had to enable a 'shared decision' between the patient and the clinician. A PIFU timeframe will be agreed e.g. PIFU for 1 year. This means that the patient can contact the service during that time if they require an appointment. If an appointment has not been required, and the timeframe has elapsed, then they will be discharged back to their GP.

PIFU is not used if a patient would have otherwise been discharged, or if they require a routine follow up for their condition.

Why use PIFU?

75% of all Outpatient appointments are follow ups. This equates to around 90 million follow ups nationally. PIFU can reduce unnecessary follow ups which can mean patients are only seen when they need to be. Offering follow up care in this way, empowers patients and gives them greater flexibility and more choice over how they access care. This can help reduce the number of appointments with limited clinical value.

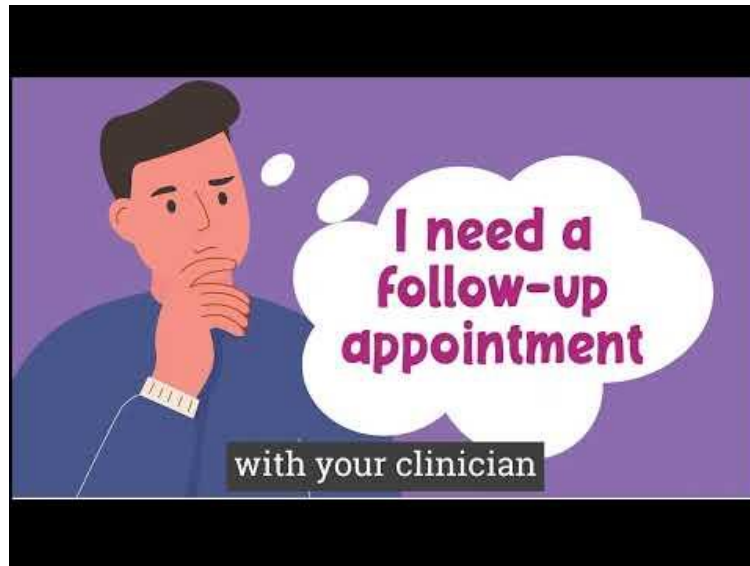
If follow ups are reduced this can free up clinicians to see new patients that are waiting to be seen, over time this could reduce the waiting times.

This video further describes PIFU:

Either click on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZPc89wRmPk&t=2s>

Or click on the image below:



In Sussex:

We have had some uptake of PIFU in Sussex but this is not at the desired rate.

Each hospital has a 'PIFU Policy' which outlines how this should be used. In specialties that are using PIFU there are clear guidelines which include 'clinical criteria' for PIFU.

Our plans:

To increase PIFU across all relevant specialties. We have started to look at hospitals across the country where PIFU uptake is high and working well. We are comparing PIFU uptake in our Sussex Hospitals to the national examples of good practice.

Workshop focus:

- Participants understanding of PIFU
- Thoughts on the process and any implications
- Patient leaflets and other forms of communication
- What information/support is required whilst on a PIFU pathway
- The methods of requesting an appointment whilst on a PIFU pathway