

21 April 2022

Belfast Trust Use of Patient Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU)

Please could I make a Freedom of Information Request regarding your organisation's use of Patient Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU), which gives patients and their carers the flexibility to arrange their follow-up appointments as and when they need them. PIFU is sometimes also referred to as open-access follow-up, patient led follow-up, patient triggered follow-up, see on symptom, open appointments, open-self referral appointments or patient-activated care.

1. Please complete the below table, providing figures in relation to the number of patients waiting to start consultant-led Referral to Treatment (RTT), outpatients and Patient Initiated Follow-up (PIFU), which gives patients and their carers the flexibility to arrange their follow-up appointments as and when they need them.

The table below includes patients who have already been given an appointment date in the future.

As at end of February 2022	Total Number of Patients
Total number of new Outpatients waiting for an appointment	110,506
Total number of review patients waiting for an appointment	76,957

Belfast Trust follow regional Integrated Elective Access Protocols (IEAP) guidance to ensure that all patients on the elective care pathway are treated in order of priority. Most patient appointments are allocated through partial booking processes, where the patient is invited to contact the Trust to arrange an appointment at a time that they choose.

2. Are all outpatients included in the RTT patient numbers? Yes/no

Yes – acute hospital outpatients.

3. Does your organisation currently have technology in place to accommodate PIFU pathways? For example, a patient engagement tool for booking PIFU appointments etc.
 - a. Who is the supplier of the system?
 - b. Please provide further detail on how the technology supports PIFU

The Patient Administration System (PAS) has the functionality to accommodate PIFU. Clinic appointments are managed through the PAS.

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4. Does your organisation have a clinical task management tool to support PIFU which aids escalation and intervention for patients that could be lost to follow-up or their circumstances have changed
- Who is the supplier of the system?
 - Please provide further detail on how the technology supports PIFU
 - What job role is responsible for making purchasing decisions around task management software at your organisations? E.g. Chief Operating Officer, Chief Information Officer

No

5. Does your organisation have an employee or team whose role is involved in administering/co-ordinating PIFU? If yes, please state the number of FTEs involved in PIFU

The service is co-ordinated by outpatient appointment services as part of the wider range of duties (no dedicated WTE staff)

6. Please complete the table for each of the specialties listed:

Specialty	How many days a month were outpatient clinics run in February 2022?	What specialties are PIFU currently implemented in? (tick for yes)
Mental Health	20	
Cardiology	20	
Dermatology	20	yes
Diabetes	19	See comments below
Endocrinology	18	
Gastroenterology	20	
Geriatric Medicine	20	
Gynaecology	20	
Hepatology	20	
Neurology	22	
Oncology	20	
Ophthalmology	26	
Palliative medicine	14	
Paediatrics services	22	
Physiotherapy	20	
Rehabilitation	18	
Renal medicine (Nephrology)	20	
Respiratory	20	

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Rheumatology	20
Colorectal surgery	19
Breast Surgery Service	20
Ear, Nose and Throat	21
General Surgery	20
Orthopaedics and Trauma (including Fractures and Orthopaedics)	28
Orthoptics	20
Pain management	18
Plastic surgery	20
Thoracic medicine	20
Urology	21
Vascular surgery	20
Audiology Service	19
Other*	28

There were 20 working days in February. Specialties where clinics were held on more than 20 days include those that were held at weekends.

*Other specialties include; Adult Cystic Fibrosis, Cardiac Surgery, Clinical Genetics, Clinical Neurophysiology, Coronavirus Screening, Covid-19 Vaccination, Dental Conservation, Emergency Medicine, General Medicine, Haematology (Clinical), Haemophilia, Immunology, Infectious Diseases, Medical Biochemistry, Neurosurgery, Neurovascular, Nutrition & Dietetics, Obstetrics, Optometry, Oral Medicine, Oral Surgery, Orthodontic, Osteoporosis, Periodontics, Pharmacist, Phlebotomy, Prosthetics, Radiology, Regional Fertility, Restorative Dentistry, SCBU, Special Care Restorative Dentistry, Specialist Medicine.

Arthroplasty (Orthopaedic joint replacement) Helpline – patients can contact the service on the Helpline mobile if they are having problems and are (a) given appropriate advice and/or (b) are seen face-to-face, if required.

In other specialties, if patients make contact with issues they may be given appropriate advice and/or are seen face-to-face, if required.

Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) Clinic - patients can self-refer to this service.

7. How is your organisation measuring the impact of PIFU in these specialties? e.g. size of waiting list, number of weeks patients are waiting for treatment, number of outpatient attendances

N/A

8. Has the implementation of PIFU reduced the operating hours of outpatient clinics? if so, by what percentage since implementation

N/A