

Rheumatology Nurse Service

An information guide



Rheumatology Nurse Service

Specialist nurses are available on three Northern Care Alliance (NCA) sites :

- Rochdale Infirmary
- Fairfield General Hospital
- North Manchester General Hospital

Our nurses are highly experienced professionals with advanced skills in caring for patients with rheumatology conditions such as:-

- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Ankylosing Spondylitis
- Psoriatic Arthropathy
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus
- Many other related conditions

Your first appointment in the rheumatology service will be with a consultant rheumatologist or a member of the medical team for your diagnosis.

You will then be provided with appointments through your consultant to see the specialist nurse for further management of your condition in the long-term. The rheumatology nurses provide the follow up care encompassing assessment of your condition, treatment, advice and information.

You can also request appointments with the specialist nurse for joint injections, support and management of a sustained flare up.

Appointments are made as soon as possible and we try to ensure that they take place within a few weeks of the request.

We try to ensure that more urgent appointments are accommodated as soon as there is a clinic slot available.

The specialist nurses can refer patients to other services if necessary such as:

- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Occupational therapy
- Orthotics

There are other agencies which offer help and advice on many rheumatological issues such as:

Arthritis Research UK

(formerly the Arthritis Research Campaign - ARC)

www.arthritisresearch.uk.org

National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS)

www.rheumatoid.org.uk

Free phone 0800 298 7650.

Rheumatology advice line

If you are experiencing problems with your disease, treatment or monitoring you can ring the specialist nurses' advice line. This is an answer phone where you can leave your name and telephone number and one of the nurses will return your call **although this may not be on the same day.**

It is advisable to spell out any unusual names and repeat your telephone number twice to avoid any confusion. If you have your hospital number, please leave this as well.

Aim of the advice line

This telephone service is available to provide access to advice and support to patients who attend the rheumatology department at any NCA hospital site. It is run by trained nurses who specialise in rheumatology conditions.

Who may use the advice line?

All patients who attend the rheumatology department at any NCA hospital site may use the advice line. If you are too unwell to call the advice line yourself, a close relative or carer may call on your behalf, with your permission. **Relatives/carers should not call the advice line in any other circumstances, as the nurse is not able to discuss your care with them.**

What happens next?

With this information, the nurse will discuss with you what your best plan of action should be. Sometimes the nurse will be able to give you immediate advice. On other occasions, they will need to consult your hospital notes and/or one of the rheumatology doctors before giving you further advice.

This can sometimes take a few days but the nurse will call you back once your problem has been discussed and advice is available.

Do not call the advice line:

- To change an appointment. Please ring the appointment centre on 0161 778 2233 to do this.
- To obtain test results, unless specifically asked to do so at your last appointment.

If you need urgent or general medical advice; you should contact your GP, NHS Direct or attend the accident and emergency department at your local hospital.

When should you call the advice line?

You should call the advice line for general information regarding your diagnosis and treatment:

- If you have an adverse reaction to any treatment given in the clinic.
- If you are experiencing side effects which you feel may be caused by the medication prescribed for your rheumatological condition.
- If you have a 'flare up' of your condition that has not improved after using self-help measures. There is a leaflet "Coping with Flares" available.
- If you have concerns about your symptoms, medications or treatment that need to be discussed before your next appointment.
- To report progress if the doctor or nurse specifically asked you to do so.

These are NOT emergency numbers

In the event of emergencies contact either your general practitioner or out of hours service/A&E department.

If you are requesting **changes to an appointment** please contact our Trust contact centre on:

0161 778 2233 - Open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm Saturday.

Advice line numbers

Fairfield General

0161 918 8562

North Manchester General

0161 720 2380

Rochdale Infirmary

01706 517233

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو ، براہ کرم ترجمانی اور ترجمہ خدمت سے رابطہ کریں

Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

ইংরাজী যদি আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না হয় এবং আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তবে অনুগ্রহ করে দোভাষী এবং অনুবাদ পরিষেবাটিতে যোগাযোগ করুন

إذا لم تكن الإنجليزية هي لغتك الأولى وتحتاج إلى مساعدة ، فيرجى الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الشفوية والتحريرية

☎ : 0161 627 8770

@ : interpretation@pat.nhs.uk

To improve our care environment for Patients, Visitors and Staff, **Northern Care Alliance NHS Group** is Smoke Free including buildings, grounds & car parks.

For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897


For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service

The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA) is one of the largest NHS organisations in the country, employing 17,000 staff and providing a range of hospital and community healthcare services to around 1 million people across Salford, Oldham, Bury, Rochdale and surrounding areas. Our Care Organisations are responsible for providing our services, delivering safe, high quality and reliable care to the local communities they serve.

The NCA brings together Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and the hospitals and community services of The Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, and Rochdale Infirmary (currently part of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust).

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Date of publication: February 2017

Date of review: November 2020

Date of next review: November 2022

Ref: PI(M)1028

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