

Sandwell Community Heart Failure Service

Information and advice for patients

Community Heart Failure

What is the Community Heart Failure Service?

The Community Heart Failure Service is a follow-up service for patients who have a diagnosis of heart failure. Heart failure simply means that for some reason, your heart is not pumping blood around the body as well as it used to.

The team is made up of Heart Failure Specialist Nurses, Heart Failure Nurses and Healthcare Assistants.

What does the service provide?

The Community Heart Failure Service provides:

- Support, education and advice for you, your relatives and carers, including Information about:
 - managing your condition
 - medications
 - food and drink
 - treatment
 - lifestyle changes
 - what to do if you are feeling unwell
 - managing symptoms
 - activity
- Monitoring following changes in your medication for heart failure.
- Telephone advice for you, your relatives and carers.
- Encouragement to help you become actively involved in monitoring and managing your own condition.
- Communication between hospital and community, including cardiologists and GP practices.
- Heart Failure Support Group meetings.

Where will I see the Community Heart Failure team?

The team run a number of community clinics across Sandwell, so they are able to offer you an appointment at a venue closer to your home. Home visits can be arranged for those patients who are housebound. We are also be able to give advice over the telephone.

While you are in our care, all staff will:

- Act in a professional manner and treat you with dignity and respect.
- Keep your information confidential, accurate and secure at all times. Only share information with your permission or when it will benefit your healthcare.

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- Assess your needs and discuss the potential for you to participate in self-care, providing a care/management plan to support you until you, or with support of family/carers, are capable and confident in all aspects of your self-care.

How often will I need to be seen?

Initially you may need to be seen quite frequently; however the appointments will gradually reduce if your condition is stabilised and you may be eventually discharged from routine follow up.

When should I contact the service?

Please contact your Heart Failure Nurse if there are any changes to your condition or if you are experiencing any of the following:

- Swelling of your feet, ankles or abdomen (tummy).
- Sudden weight gain – if you put on 3lb or more in weight over two to five days.
- Feeling breathless, wheezing or coughing.
- Fatigue (feeling unusually tired and weak).

If you have any concerns

Staff will deal with your concerns professionally and responsibly and can be contacted by calling the Contact Centre (details below)

If you are unhappy with the care you are being provided and discussions with staff have not put this right then you can contact: **PATIENT ADVICE AND LIAISON SERVICE (PALS)**

Tel: 0121 507 5836 Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

Please leave a message if the line is engaged or if you are calling outside these times.

Email: swb-tr.pals@nhs.net

PALS aim to:

- Provide the right advice and support, and signpost as appropriate.
- Listen to and help resolve any concerns that usually require intervention quite quickly, by liaising with staff on your behalf.
- Provide advice on how to make a complaint.
- Pass on positive feedback to the relevant members of staff.

PALS can help to resolve issues of concern at a local level, but is not part of the formal complaints process.

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Information and advice for people with a bladder or bowel problem

Community Heart Failure

Contact details

Your Heart Failure Specialist Nurse(s) is:

Contact Centre

Tel: 0121 507 2664, option 4

Working hours:

If you have a problem out of these hours please contact your GP surgery, or for 24 hour advice call NHS111

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our website www.swbh.nhs.uk, follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5303 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



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