

Sandwell Community Respiratory Service

Information and advice for patients

Community Respiratory Service

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Community Respiratory Service

Welcome to the Community Respiratory Service in Sandwell

The Community Respiratory Service in Sandwell is a service dedicated to people with breathing problems. The service aims to support you, your family and carers by offering access to experienced nurses, physiotherapists, dietitians and occupational therapists who specialise in treating and helping people with respiratory conditions. By supporting and treating you at home it is hoped that you will not need to be admitted to hospital but if you are admitted it may also be possible to be discharged earlier and be supported by the Community Respiratory Service at home.

Following your initial assessment with the Community Respiratory Service a plan of care is agreed with the clinician. They may have recommended that you are seen by the dietitian, occupational therapist or in the oxygen assessment clinic, or attend a pulmonary rehabilitation class.

If you have any problems relating to your breathing problem you can contact the Community Respiratory Service for advice and we will aim to contact you on the same day or at the latest by the end of the next working day.

Please remember to read through your self care plan for further advice and what actions to take when you are unwell.

Services we provide

- **Home visits** for assessment, treatment and support during an infection.
- **Oxygen service** for assessment, prescription and follow-up for use of oxygen at home.
- **Pulmonary rehabilitation** to improve your breathing and ability to do activities that are important to you and a follow-up 'maintenance programme' for when you have completed this.
- **Dietary support and advice** from a dietitian to help with your nutritional and dietary needs.
- **A weatherwise educational programme** for certain patients who have very frequent chest infections that usually require a hospital admission.
- **Fatigue and breathlessness (FAB) clinic** for certain patients who are experiencing fatigue and anxiety associated with their breathlessness.

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Service times and locations

Service	Times	Location
Home Visit Nurse & Physiotherapist	Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm Saturday & Sunday 8.30am - 4.30pm	Your place of residence in Sandwell
Oxygen Clinic	Monday all day Wednesday all day Friday all day	Lyng Centre 2nd floor
Oxygen Clinic Home Assessment	Tuesdays & Fridays 9am - 4.30pm (For housebound patients only)	Your place of residence in Sandwell
Pulmonary Rehabilitation	Twice a week on different days and times.	Various locations in Sandwell.
Dietetic clinic	2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month 1.30pm - 4:30pm 1st & 3rd Monday of the month 9.30am-12.30pm	Lyng Centre 2nd floor
Home Visit Dietitian	For housebound patients only	Your place of residence in Sandwell
Fatigue, Anxiety & Breathlessness (FAB) Clinic	Thursdays 1am-3pm	Courses run several times a year - Rowley Regis Hospital

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Oxygen Assessment Service

Your oxygen levels may be checked by a healthcare professional (physiotherapist, GP or nurse) and if they are low, you may be sent an appointment to attend the oxygen clinic for further assessment. If you are referred to the oxygen clinic, this does not necessarily mean you will be prescribed oxygen. You are referred to our clinic for further assessment to test whether you need oxygen or not.

What happens at the oxygen clinic?

At the clinic you will have a specialist blood test which is needed to assess how much oxygen you have in your blood. From the results of the blood test we will know if you need oxygen.

If it is thought that you need oxygen for when you are walking or exerting yourself, you may be asked to perform an additional walking assessment.

If you already have oxygen at home, we may find that the dose of oxygen you receive needs to be altered or, if your health and oxygen levels have improved so much you may no longer need oxygen.

Once you are on oxygen you will need to be monitored on a regular basis in our clinic. It is very important that you attend your clinic appointments so we can make sure that you are safely receiving the right amount of oxygen. **If you have oxygen at home and do not think you have been reviewed recently, please contact us immediately on 0121 507 2664.**

Whatever the outcome of the clinic, we will ensure you have a personalised treatment plan that you understand. It is also possible that the test results confirm that you do not need oxygen, in which case oxygen will not be prescribed or if you had previously been prescribed oxygen and there is an improvement in your health oxygen will be removed.

It is also possible to be seen at home but these appointments are reserved for those patients who are physically unable to leave the home even with assistance.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Pulmonary Rehabilitation is an exercise and education treatment programme for those who experience shortness of breath every day. It helps those with COPD (which includes emphysema, chronic bronchitis and asthma), bronchiectasis and pulmonary fibrosis.

People that have these conditions usually complain of shortness of breath, cough, phlegm and chest tightness. Pulmonary Rehabilitation will help you to cope with how your chest condition is affecting you in your day to day life.

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Although pulmonary rehabilitation will not change the condition of your lungs, it will help you to:

- have an improved quality of life
- experience less anxiety and depression
- feel fitter
- have less shortness of breath
- have fewer chest infections and hospital visits

The aims of pulmonary rehabilitation are:

1. To improve your fitness so that you can:
 - do more of the things you want to do without feeling so tired and breathless
 - complete your day to day tasks more easily
2. To help you learn more about your chest condition and how to manage it.

How is the programme structured?

The programme lasts for 10 weeks and consists of 2 sessions per week, each session lasting about 2 hours. There are programmes available in different areas in Sandwell. At the start of the programme you will receive an information booklet with a timetable for you to take home.

In week 1 you will be assessed so that we can develop an exercise programme just for you, based on how fit you are before you start the programme. You will then come twice a week for 8 weeks and your final week will be a post-programme assessment.

In addition to the 2 sessions a week that you attend with us we will encourage you to start exercising at home as well. We will go through the exercises to do at home at the start of the programme so if you have any problems you can speak to us and we can help sort things out.

Some patients feel that although they would like to benefit from exercising, they do not want to attend an exercise programme for various reasons. If this is the case then we will go through the exercises with you at home and encourage you to carry on by yourself.

What happens at the sessions?

The first hour of each session is spent exercising. Although you may not have exercised for some time, please do not worry. The exercises are simple and a member of staff monitors you at all times and adjusts the exercises to suit you and yet still improve your fitness. Each exercise is done at your own pace as best as you can.

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The second hour is an informal learning and discussion session, where you will also be able to ask any questions you have. Some of the topics covered are:

- Everything you need to know about your lung condition
- How does my medication work?
- How can I clear my chest?
- What about my diet and nutrition?
- How can I manage my low mood and anxiety?
- How can I make day to day life easier?
- What should I do if I have a chest infection?

The booklet you receive at the start of the programme covers all the talks and goes into more detail so you will be able to refer back to it at anytime.

Maintenance Programme

Most people who join the Pulmonary Rehabilitation programme enjoy it and once they complete the programme they feel they would like to continue exercising beyond the 10 weeks we offer. We have therefore put together a 16 week maintenance programme. This will give you the opportunity to continue exercising for 1 hour a week but still under the supervision of someone who has an understanding of your breathing problem and able to help you to continue to improve your fitness. Attending these sessions will be discussed with you at your last session of Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Fatigue and Breathlessness Clinic

The clinic helps people with breathlessness with some of the symptoms they may experience as a result of this.

We aim to provide you with the tools to cope with breathlessness, fatigue, anxiety and any other issues you identify.

You are encouraged to bring carers/relatives and to attend on a Thursday from 1pm-3pm for six consecutive weeks

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Occupational Therapy

What is Occupational Therapy?

Occupational therapy is making adaptations to your environment and lifestyle in order to help you perform the things you need to in your daily life and be able to live as independently as possible. This could include providing equipment or making small adaptations to reduce the effects of tiredness.

If your breathing condition is affecting your ability to complete your chosen daily tasks then an occupational therapist may be able to help you. At your initial assessment, if occupational therapy is recommended and you agree to it, then we will arrange for a therapist to come and see you.

Dietary support and advice

Following your initial assessment, it may have been recommended that you see the dietitian and you will be offered an appointment if this is the case.

How can the dietitian help?

The dietitian uses their knowledge of diet and nutrition to help treat and manage your respiratory illness.

Some people who have breathing problems notice that they are not eating as well as maybe they have done in the past and lose weight unintentionally as a result. Someone who is underweight is more likely to get a chest infection and find it harder to breathe because their lung muscles are weaker.

Other people may be overweight or obese and this can mean that extra strain is put on the heart and lungs which cause them to be short of breath, making breathing more difficult.

What happens at the appointment?

The dietitian will see you either in clinic at the Lyng Centre or at your home, depending upon how mobile you are.

Your first appointment will last around 60 minutes and the dietitian will ask you some questions about your medical history, your weight history and your diet. You will then agree together any changes to your diet.

Any review or follow-up appointments you are offered will last around 30 minutes.

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Weatherwise

At your initial assessment it may have been recommended that you take part in the weatherwise programme. Weatherwise is a special educational programme for people selected by the team who have very frequent chest infections that usually require a hospital admission.

The programme will help you to recognise the early signs of a chest infection and then follow a care plan to stop the infection from developing further by taking medication that is kept at home.

The weatherwise programme is run during the winter months. A member of the team will give you more information about the programme if it is suitable for you.

Breathe Easy Support Group

Breathe Easy is a national support group for people with breathing problems. The support group is run by members themselves with the support of the British Lung Foundation. This enables each group the opportunity to support each other as they see fit and most groups usually organise social events and learning activities of interest to their members.

The British Lung Foundation

Helpline: 03000 030 555

Website: www.blf.org.uk/

Useful websites

Age UK

www.ageuk.org.uk

Asthma UK

www.asthma.org.uk

Carers UK

www.carersuk.org

British Lung Foundation

<https://www.blf.org.uk/>

Baywater Healthcare

(information for people using oxygen at home)

www.baywater.co.uk

0800 373 580

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Community Respiratory Service Contact Details

You can contact the service by telephoning: 0121 507 2664, select option 4, then option 1.

You can contact the service

Monday - Friday, 8am - 6pm by telephoning:

0121 507 2664 (select option 4, then option 1).

For the last 2 hours of our opening hours 6-8pm Monday - Friday, please use our mobile number on 07866 360 145.

We are also open on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays 8.30am - 4.30pm. Please also use this mobile number at these times.

This is not an emergency service. We aim to see you on the same day you call or by the end of the next working day at the latest. We will always advise you when we will be out to see you. Please refer to your self-care plan for further advice.

Further information

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.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2018) Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in over 16s: diagnosis and management : guidance (NG115). Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng115> (Accessed 02 September 2021).

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