

Sandwell Community Heart Failure Service

Information and advice for patients

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.
- 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

If you have feedback or a concern about our services;

1. **Talk to Us** - Talk first to the staff involved.
2. **Purple Point** - If you are on a ward, you can use the Purple Point telephones located around the hospital sites to talk to someone straight away or you can call 0121 507 4999 Monday – Sunday 9.00am – 9.00pm We can also provide details of your local advocacy service.
3. **Informal concern** - If you have a concern and want to talk to someone to help resolve it, please call 0121 507 5836, 10am – 4pm, Monday - Friday or email swb-tr.pals@nhs.net
4. **Complaint** - If we have not been able to resolve your concerns or if you want to make a complaint, please call 0121 507 4080 / 0121 507 5892 or 0121 507 6440, 10am – 4pm, Monday – Friday or email swbh.complaints@nhs.net

Contact details

Your Heart Failure Specialist Nurse(s) is:

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Contact Centre

Tel: 0121 507 2664, option 3, then option 4, then option 2

Working hours:

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If you have a problem out of these hours please contact your GP surgery, or for 24 hour advice call NHS 111

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