

Continence Assessment

Your healthcare professional has referred you for a full assessment of your bladder and/or bowel problem. This leaflet explains about what you can expect from your assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

We have been notified that you have a problem with incontinence. Incontinence means partial or complete loss of bladder and/or bowel control. We are here to help you with this.

If you are housebound, a community nurse will aim to visit you within 14 working days from your referral. If you are able to go to a GP appointment, and can get on to an examination couch, you will be given an appointment at a clinic near your home to be assessed by a bladder and bowel specialist nurse.

Clinics are held at different locations throughout Lambeth and Southwark. You will be offered an appointment within 25 working days of your referral. If your preferred clinic is not available within the 25 days, you will be offered a different location.

Completing a form before your assessment

Before your assessment you will be given forms that you need to complete. They include:

- a questionnaire about how your bladder and bowel problems affect your quality of life
- a '3 day fluid diary', which tells us about the type and amount of drinks you have, and the amount of pee (urine) you pass

The diary will tell us if you are having too much or not enough liquid. We might need to scan your bladder after you have been to the toilet. This involves moving a small, smooth, probe over your lower stomach and does not hurt. The bowel diary tells us about your bowel habits.

Outcome of assessment

Depending on your individual need, a treatment plan will be discussed with you, including ways in which you can help your symptoms. This might include pelvic floor exercises, bladder training, fluid and diet advice. Medicines may also be considered.

Continence pads

Continence pads will only be given to you if they are necessary. This decision is based on the assessment, and not just on your personal preference. If you are given pads, we will organise your first 12 weeks supply (delivered within 5 to 10 working days).

After that you will need to use the NHS Supply Chain call back service for more pads on, **tel: 0800 030 4466**, or **email: home.delivery@supplychain.nhs.uk**. You will need to give them your name, postcode and contact telephone number.

Before your first delivery, you will need to buy your own pads at large supermarkets and chemists. Community nurses and specialist nurses **do not** have a supply of continence products. **If you do not re-order your continence pads, no delivery will be made.**

If your needs change, NHS Supply Chain will not be able to change your continence product prescription. A new referral will be needed from your GP. If your continence pads are changed, this will become effective at your next delivery cycle.

Useful sources of information

Bladder & Bowel Community

web: www.bladderandbowel.org

National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

Guidelines on the management of urinary incontinence in women

web: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng123

Guidelines on managing lower urinary tract symptoms in men

web: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg97

Contact us

If you need to speak with someone, please contact the Single Point of Access (SPA) on, **tel:** 0203 049 4020

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline. **tel:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

tel: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **email:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

tel: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **email:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch. **tel:** 020 7188 8815 **email:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day. **tel:** 111

NHS website

Online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing. **web:** www.nhs.uk

Leaflet number: 4685/VER2

Date published: February 2019

Review date: February 2022

© 2019 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A list of sources is available on request